



Learning an Instrument

A Practice Guide for Parents

Learning a musical instrument is challenging ! Here is a quick guide to help you help your child to practise their musical instrument.

You do not need to know how to play an instrument or read music to help your child.
The important thing is that you set time aside to listen to your child.

Firstly, make sure your child has an instrument to practice on. It is essential that to make any progress on an instrument you have an instrument in good working order. If your instrument requires accessories - reeds, valve oil, cleaners etc make sure you have them to hand.

- **Don't practice for hours - short but regular practice is good !**
- **Decide on a time to practise** and try and keep it the same everyday - for example 10 minutes before tea or a favourite television programme.
- **Have a goal for each session** - ask your child what they have been asked to practise - it might be keeping a steady beat, note recognition, or to practise certain scales - or use the correct fingering when playing a phrase on the piano
- **Don't try and play something the whole way through to start with.** Begin with the tricky parts - even if that's at the end of the piece - often we only practice the parts we can play and stop when it gets difficult !
- Leave the instrument out **safely**. If you can see it you are more likely to pick it up and play it.
- **Listen to as much music as possible.** Watch Youtube and find clips of children playing the same pieces as your child is learning.

- **Encourage them to perform at home** - not only will this improve their playing but also their confidence.
- **Let them teach you !**
Let children tell you what they are learning, what they are trying to achieve - make them the expert!
- **Ask for help** - send a note in with your child, email me or speak to your child's instrumental teacher.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's music tuition at school, please contact me l.sarton@crescent.hants.sch.uk



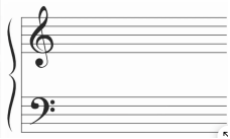
What are they talking about - a guide for non -musicians

Glossary of terms

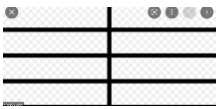
The Five lines of music are called The Musical Stave



At the beginning of any piece of music is a symbol called a treble clef - this just tells you the pitch of the notes. A pianist will also use the Bass Clef - which are the notes played with the left hand.



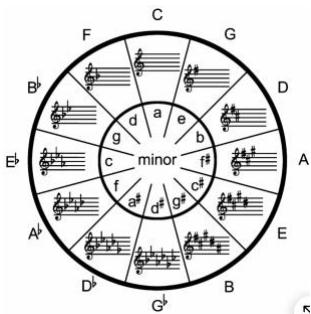
Bar Lines - divides a piece of music up into a defined number of beats



Time signature - concentrate on the top number - this tells you how many beats there are in a bar - for example 3, 4 etc



Key Signature - these symbols tell you which 'sharps and flats to play' a sharp (the sharp is a note a bit higher and a flat a bit lower)










There is often an Italian term at the beginning of a piece of music - these are a guide as to how to play the piece.....here are a few to be going on with !

Andante Walking pace
 Allegro Lively, fast
 Cantabile In a singing style
 Crescendo Getting louder
 Diminuendo Getting softer
 Moderato Moderate Speed
 Adagio Slow and Stately
 Vivace Lively and Quick

pp pianissimo Very soft
 p piano softly
 mp mezzo piano moderately soft
 mf mezzo forte moderately loud
 f forte loud
 ff fortissimo very loud

Notes

Notes have different values

Notes	Name		Value
	Semibreve	Whole note	4 beats
	Minim	Half note	2 beats
	Crotchet	Quarter note	1 beat
	Quaver	Eighth note	½ beat
	Semi-quaver	Sixteenth note	¼ beat
	2 Quavers	2 Eighth notes	1 beat
	4 Semi-quavers	4 Sixteenth notes	1 beat

Have fun !

